

MINUTES
TOWN OF GROTON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MAY 17, 2011 - 7:00 P.M.
GROTON TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Members Present: Mitchell, Nado, Sarasin, Cole
Alternates Present: None
Staff: Quinn, Galetta

Chairman Nado called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Cole read the Call of the Hearing.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

HDC 11-14 – 14 Fort Rachel Place; Michael Hardesty, owner; Erik Kudlis, applicant; Deck & fence. PIN #261806392165 – Continued

Erik Kudlis, President of Erik's Design Build, and Michael Hardesty, owner of 14 Fort Rachel Place, presented to the Commission regarding a proposed deck and fence. The applicants have revised the deck plans based on feedback from the Commission. Markers and indicators were put on the property to give the Commission a better visual representation of where the deck and fence will be positioned. Landscaping and plantings of Arborvitae will be used to shield the view of the deck from the public way. A gray colored, maintenance free material will be used for the deck. The existing deck protrudes out 4' from the house while the proposed deck is shortened and stepped-in 4'. Lattice work made of the same maintenance free material can be painted but the manufacturer does not recommend it. The applicant is willing to use cedar for the lattice as an alternative. The deck will be seen regardless of how it is modified to keep it out sight from the public way. Since the location is not a well traveled area of the district the applicant feels the deck will be seen but the impact will be minimal. Applicant requests that the Commission consider the application in light of this feature. The Commission felt that the height of the deck is more of a concern than the sight impact. Additionally, the Commission was concerned that the lattice work might be vertical rather than horizontal as the preference is for horizontal. The owner would also like to install fencing primarily to keep his pet safe in the yard. He is proposing a white cedar picket fence with flat caps. The wood will be allowed to weather naturally. The fence will be at a height of 52" which will minimize the height issue of the deck.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Site Plan
- Photographs

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against. A letter was submitted from abutting neighbors Frank Fulchiero and Kristine Mulholland in favor of the project. The public hearing closed at 7:26 p.m.

HDC 11-17 – 57 Pearl Street; Soogie, LLC, owner; Steven Young, applicant; Fence & windows. PIN #261914432170

Architect Steven Young presented to the Commission for Soogie LLC, owner of 57 Pearl Street. The homeowner has prior approval for the relocation and replacement of some window openings to enhance the appearance of the house and make it more historical in context. In the field the owner decided to replace all the windows in the structure. A simulated divided light window, made by Eagle which is a high-end division of Anderson, was used. The windows have an off-white aluminium clad exterior and wooden painted interior. The Commission expressed its disappointment with the choice to replace all of the historic windows in the house rather than trying to repair them. The applicant explained that the homeowner was concerned with energy efficiency and felt that replacement windows would solve that problem. The Commission didn't think the replacement windows would enhance the look of the house is also concerned with a built up look on frame of new windows. The applicant stated that the only difference in appearance will be the sill. The Commission asked for a photograph of a finished window to compare the look. Additionally, the Commission is concerned with the loss of glass in the replacement windows. However, the applicant stated that the square area of glass per window is exactly the same.

The second part of the application is a proposed fence to follow an existing granite wall. From the architect's read of reactions given by the Commission previously, he has changed the original plan. They were initially attempting to keep the top of the fence at an even 36" high. This has been changed so that it will follow the granite wall with a slight 6" – 8" drop. The fence will be installed level but there will be a stepped down drop where the planting bed is lower. The picket fence will be made using painted pressure treated wood and will match the existing one on Seahorse Lane.

The Applicant requested the removal of the windows from the application.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Plot plan
- Photographs

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 8:02 p.m.

HDC 11-18 – 123 High Street; Kevin, Jr. & Heather Lebovitz, owners; Advanced Improvements LLC, applicant; Shingles. PIN #261918301980

David Preka, of Advanced Improvements, LLC presented to the Commission for Kevin & Heather Lebovitz owners of 123 High Street. He is proposing to replace the existing wooden roof shingles with a 3-tab shingle. The Commission felt that an architectural shingle would be much closer to what the original wood shake shingle looks like. The choice of color is Weatherwood. A ridge vent will be added on roof. The Commission requested that the ridge vent be run along the entire length of the roof from end to end. Lead flashing around chimney will be replaced like for like.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Shingle sample board
- Photographs

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 8:10 p.m.

HDC 11-19 – 13 Water Street; 85th Day Restaurant Group LLC, owner; Michael McKinley, applicant; Window, door & wall details. PIN #261918306223

Dan Meiser, owner of 13 Water Street, and Architect Tom Taylor presented to the Commission regarding window, door and wall details. These are three outstanding items that the Commission requested. For the wall surface the applicant is proposing an aged concrete. The windows will be simulated divided light with permanently adhered muntions and an appropriately dark insert so that one cannot see directly through the glass. The bar window and door details remain the same as the presentation in the pre-application hearing. Marvin windows will be used.

The following exhibits were presented:

- Plans and specs
- Photograph

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none. The public hearing closed at 8:18 p.m.

Proposed changes to Part I, Page I-4 (Miscellaneous Fixtures) and Part II, Page II-32 (Trim & Ornament)

Part I, Page I-4 Miscellaneous Fixtures: Request to change “In-ground swimming pools” to “in-ground swimming pools at existing grade”.

Part II, Page II-32 Trim & Ornament: Request to add “Routine repair of trim or ornament, including the incidental replacement of individual trim or ornament members, is permitted by right and does not require an application to the Historic District Commission, so long as such repair and replacement does not alter the historic appearance of such trim or ornament. However, it is often difficult in partial patching to match the texture of adjoining materials, and the repair of existing trim or ornament is encouraged in lieu of replacement. Any proposed large-scale trim or ornament replacement must be submitted first for review and approval by the Commission.”

Chairman Nado asked for comments in favor or against and there were none.

Chairman Nado closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC HEARING

HDC 11-14 – 14 Fort Rachel Place

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Cole, seconded by Mitchell, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1798.

HDC 11-17 – 57 Pearl Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1799.

HDC 11-18 – 123 High Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Sarasin, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1800.

HDC 11-19 – 13 Water Street

MOTION: To grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously. Issued Certificate of Appropriateness #1801.

Proposed changes to Part I, Page I-4 (Miscellaneous Fixtures) and Part II, Page II-32 (Trim & Ornament)

MOTION: To grant changes to Historic District Handbook

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Sarasin, so voted unanimously.

III. PRE-APPLICATION HEARINGS

Bill Cook from Benchmark Assisted Living appeared before the Commission regarding Academy Point at Mystic located at 20 Academy Lane. Academy Point is an assisted living facility that is currently undergoing interior renovations to add a programmed specific area for residents with Alzheimer's. He is appearing before the Commission to propose a secured courtyard area with a fence enclosure. There will be no direct views from the public way and the area backs up to a cliff. The fence will be 8' high in total. This will consist of a solid 6' fence with 2' of lattice at the top similar to the existing dumpster enclosure. A solid fence will provide less confusion for the residents. The color of the fence will be tan to reduce the glare factor which is not desirable for the residents. Additionally, for security purposes 8' is the minimum fence height needed. While the Commission does have concerns with an 8' tall fence, the usual concerns that the Commission wrestles with in determining appropriateness of fencing is not an issue. The fence is integrated and fits with the building in that the facility is approximately 4 stories tall. The fencing material will be vinyl.

Annette and Dave LaPietra, who live at 42 Larchmont Terrace, appeared before the Commission to propose a hot dog cart at 49-53 West Main Street. They have received permission from Bank Square Books to locate the cart in front of the store. The cart is mobile but will be stationary for selling food and removed every night. The cart has Ledge Light Health District approval and the applicant is a certified food handler. The umbrella may have writing and a sandwich board will be displayed. The anticipated

selling hours will be weekends from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to begin. From a historic perspective this is something that would have been seen in the downtown area. Although the cart is contemporary in looks, the Commission is less concerned with this because the cart is mobile and will be removed. It is felt that the cart could be an asset to the district and that it is something people will enjoy.

Peter Springsteel appeared before the Commission on behalf of Mystic Art Association owner of 9 Water Street. The Art Association is adding electronic controls for the jointly owned parking lot. The lot owned by Mystic Art Association and Steamboat Wharf Parking and serves all the businesses downtown. Signage must be added to explain the controls and make parking lot work. There will be five, black and white, metal signs mounted on metal posts. The size of the entrance and exit signs are 36" x 24". Commission questioned whether the signs could be smaller and attached to something rather than a metal post. Sandwich board signs are also planned to try to catch people and delivery trucks before they errantly turn into the driveway. The Commission felt that the signs seemed confusing and that they should be made as unobstrusive as possible. They are concerned with the quantity and size of the signs that will contribute to an institutional look for a very lovely location. Staff stated that the Planning Commission approval is also required. The system is going to go into effect fairly soon. The Commission suggested that temporary signage could be used until the details have been worked out to bring the application to a public hearing. Staff stated that signs are considered temporary if they are up for under 30-days.

David Preka of Advanced Improvements LLC appeared before the Commission regarding 6 Bank Street, owned by Mark Masterjoseph. He is proposing to remove existing cedar shake siding and replace it with vinyl, cedar impression siding in a matching color. The Commission would not be amenable to a vinyl siding. Alternatives to cedar shake siding were discussed such as clapboard or hardiplank. The Commission was not convinced that clapboard would be appropriate for the house and they will look at the property to determine what might and might not work.

Commission member Michael Sarasin recused himself and appeared before the Commission regarding his home at 27 Gravel Street. He would like to replace the existing garage siding with HardiePlank siding. He plans to use the same color as the HardiePlank siding on the cottage, which is light gray. The current garage siding, which was power washed at some point, is in disrepair and needs to be replaced.

IV. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS – None

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF May 3, 2011

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 3, 2011

Motion made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Commission members discussed a pre-application hearing proposal to replace existing skylights at 7 West Mystic Avenue. Staff stated that approval was given in 1977 for replacement of a skylight and installation of another. The current proposal is for smaller skylights because the homeowner is unable to find the existing sizes.

Staff stated that Rod Desmairais telephoned the office to say that he is working with an engineer to resolve the issues at 81 High Street. Staff advised the Town Attorney regarding the conversation and is now waiting to receive updated plans.

VII. NEW BUSINESS – None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:02 p.m. made by Mitchell, seconded by Cole, so voted unanimously.

Elaine Cole, Secretary
Historic District Commission

Prepared by Lynda Galetta, Office Assistant II